

12/13/18

The Honorable Ajit Pai, Chairman
The Honorable Michael O’Rielly, Commissioner
The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner

Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

On behalf of the **Belmont Center Business Association**, I write to support the Comments of the Cable Act Preservation Alliance (“CAPA”) and to disapprove of the proposals and tentative conclusions set forth in the FCC’s September 25 Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making in *Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as Amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992*, MB Docket 05-311.

Belmont, Massachusetts has a small but very diverse business community with a wide range of local retail owners who have very small marketing and advertising budgets and very few options to promote their businesses to the local residents.

Our PEG access TV provider, the **Belmont Community Media Center (BMC)** produces a regular program that features our local business community and raises awareness about small businesses during annual events through the year. In addition, BMC works with our businesses to raise money and donations for the Belmont Food Pantry, in the production and live cablecasting of an annual Gifts of Hope Telethon.

The proposed FCC rulemaking will do irreparable harm to the small business community in Belmont by reducing the franchise fees that fund BMC, a vital and unique media platform that we count on every day to keep the public informed about business news and events, as well as the mission of the Belmont Food Pantry.

Belmont Community Media Center enables the residents of Belmont, MA to watch uniquely local programming about their community and local events and issues of interest to them. And that was the intent of the PEG provisions of the 1984 Cable Act – to enhance local voices, serve local community needs and interests, and strengthen our local democracy.

By defining “franchise fee” in an overly broad fashion to include “in-kind” support, the FCC’s proposals will shift the fair balance between cable franchising authorities and cable operators and will force communities to choose between franchise fees and PEG channels, – something that was never the intent of the Act.

The Belmont Center Business Association appreciates your consideration and hope you will protect PEG channels in our community and others by choosing **not** to adopt many of the proposals in the Further Notice.

Sincerely,

Gerry Dickhut, President
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